MMR_0044 George Konrad

Achievement Program's MMR No. 44

GEORGE KONRAD
5 Terri Lane
W. Peabody, Mass.

George's interest in model railroading dates back to a Christmas Lionel set given to him by his parents when he was five years old. His dad, George Sr., spent many evenings constructing a table with folding legs for the layout and was able to fool little Georgie with the story that it was a new dining room table for "mamma". George now has a "little Georgie" of his own who received a train set last Christmas, Georgie was also five years old and it seems a family tradition has been started.

When George became a teen-ager his Lionel set met the fate of so many others, it was sold to a friend. Perhaps it was just as well for the friend also had a little boy to surprise.

The model railroading bug bit once again with a final tremendous crunch in the fall of 1958 on the third floor of a Spanish style barracks building at Fort Bliss, Texas. Walking past the bunk of a stranger George saw "Model Railroader" magazines spread on the bunk and he stopped to look. Thus began two things, a hobby and a comradeship with Mr. Jack Taylor of Portland, Oregon, still a N.M.R.A. member and friend. Jack happened to have a tackle box chuck full of the finest tools which he was willing to lend, and George was on his way. Jack and George had an against-regulations 4x8 track board in the attic of the barracks and it saw some use! Upon leaving the service George had an argument with a perfect hard-headed stranger at a railroad club and here began a second lasting friendship with Dave Newcomb, a now well-known modeler in the N.E.R.

The first convention Dave and George attended was a regional in Greenfield Mass. At the convention Dave and George met Allan Hanson, the HOn2 pioneer. Here began another permanent friendship and some years later Allan blind-dated George with a sweet young thing, Trudi, who a year later became George's wife with Allan serving as best man. George and Trudi have two children, Georgie, 5 and Holly, 2.

George's interest lies in mining railroading and he had a good-sized partially scenicked HO layout, the Mineral Point and Western, built with mining in mind. It was point-to-point with continuous running capabilities and had hand laid switches and Harvest Line Track. The scenery was pretty rugged with mostly high mountain running.

This is all in the past. It seems eleven years ago back in El Paso, George became acquainted with a Mr. Tom Baker, a master craftsman working in O scale. Tom made master patterns for some of the casting outfits and his model building was incredible. At that time Tom made a prophecy to George, he said, "It may take many years but someday,

(Continued on Page 63)

George, you are going to be an O gauger." Well, as of this past spring Tom's prophecy became a reality as George went into On3. The Mineral Point and Western went the way of the Lionel set. It was sold to a friend and this fall work will commence on the Tonopah and Tucumcari, On3 with a mining motif of course.

George is employed by I.B.M. Corp. in its Office Products Division as a Customer Engineer. He services typewriters, dictation equipment, dial recording networks, and computerized magnetic media typing systems.

George feels that model railroading is a perfect hobby for a person such as himself, who is interested in history, trains, mining tools, writing, and working with his hands. They all have a place and play a part in this wonderful hobby. George also notes another real benefit from the hobby and that is every person he now counts as a friend, either close or distant plus his wonderful wife he has met through model railroading. George says "If you too will stop and consider the friends you have found through this hobby and add them to the good things you normally attribute to model railroading then you will fully realize just how great this hobby really is."